AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A signaling network node configured for routing a received signaling message having message information, the signaling network node comprising:

a routing table configured for storing message class entries identifying respective message classes, each message class entry specifying at least one destination link identifier for a corresponding destination link assigned to the corresponding message class; and

a processor configured for selecting one of the destination links based on the processor classifying the received signaling message as assigned to a specific message class based on prescribed message class selection criteria, the processor configured for selecting one of the message class entries based on determining the corresponding identified message class matches the specific message class of the received signaling message, the one message class entry specifying the corresponding destination link identifier for the one destination link.

2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 1, wherein the destination links are grouped in prescribed linksets having respective linkset identifiers, the routing table further including linkset entries including destination point code entries and the respective assigned linkset identifiers, the processor configured for selecting the one message class entry based on determining a match between a destination point code value in the received signaling message and the destination point code entry of one of the linkset entries, and matching the received signaling message to the one message class entry specifying the at least one destination link within the one linkset identified by the one linkset entry.

3. (ORIGINAL) The node of claim 2, wherein the received signaling message is identified by the processor as corresponding to a message class having a plurality of the destination links assigned, the routing table further including a signaling link selection entry associated with a corresponding one of the destination link identifiers, the processor configured for selecting the one message class entry further based on a match between a signaling link selection value in the received signaling message and one of the signaling link selection entries.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 2, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on at least a portion of the destination point code.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of linkset interfaces configured for receiving signaling messages from respective input linksets, the prescribed message class selection criteria including classifying the received signaling message based on identifying one of a plurality of input linksets having supplied the received signaling message.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 1, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on prescribed user-selected selection criteria.

7. (ORIGINAL) The node of claim 6, wherein the user-selected selection criteria includes a user-selected data pattern.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 1, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on a service indicator value from the received signaling message.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 1, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on global title translation (GTT) parameters retrieved from the received signaling message.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 9, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received message based on a Global Title Address (GTA) from the GTT parameters.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method in a signaling network node for routing a received signaling message having message information, the method including:

storing message class entries identifying respective message classes in a routing table, each message class entry specifying at least one destination link identifier for a corresponding destination link assigned to the corresponding message class;

classifying the received signaling message as assigned to a specific message class based on prescribed message class selection criteria;

first selecting one of the message class entries based on the corresponding identified message class matching the specific message class of the received signaling message; and

second selecting one of the destination links based on the at least one destination link identifier specified in the one message class entry.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 11, wherein:

the destination links are grouped in prescribed linksets having respective linkset identifiers;

the storing step includes storing linkset entries including destination point code entries and the respective assigned linkset identifiers; and

the first selecting step includes determining a match between a destination point code value in the received signaling message and the destination point code entry of one of the linkset entries, and matching the received signaling message to the one message class entry specifying the at least one destination link within the one linkset identified by the one linkset entry.

13. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 12, wherein:

the storing step further includes storing in the routing table a signaling link selection entry associated with a corresponding one of the destination link identifiers;

the second selecting step includes selecting the one message class entry based on a match between a signaling link selection value in the received signaling message and one of the

signaling link selection entries.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 12, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on at least a portion of the destination point code.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 11, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on identifying one of a plurality of input linksets having supplied the received signaling message.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 11, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on prescribed user-selected selection criteria.

17. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 16, wherein the user-selected selection criteria includes a user-selected data pattern.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 11, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on a service indicator value from the received signaling message.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 11, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on global title translation (GTT) parameters retrieved from the received signaling message.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 19, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received message based on a Global Title Address (GTA) from the GTT parameters.

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A computer readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions for routing a received signaling message by a signaling network node, the sequences of instructions including instructions for performing the steps of:

storing message class entries identifying respective message classes in a routing table, each message class entry specifying at least one destination link identifier for a corresponding destination link assigned to the corresponding message class;

classifying the received signaling message as assigned to a specific message class based on prescribed message class selection criteria;

first selecting one of the message class entries based on the corresponding identified message class matching the specific message class of the received signaling message; and

second selecting one of the destination links based on the at least one destination link identifier specified in the one message class entry.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The medium of claim 21, wherein:

the destination links are grouped in prescribed linksets having respective linkset identifiers;

the storing step includes storing linkset entries including destination point code entries and the respective assigned linkset identifiers; and

the first selecting step includes determining a match between a destination point code value in the received signaling message and the destination point code entry of one of the linkset entries, and matching the received signaling message to the one message class entry specifying the at least one destination link within the one linkset identified by the one linkset entry.

23. (ORIGINAL) The medium of claim 22, wherein:

the storing step further includes storing in the routing table a signaling link selection entry associated with a corresponding one of the destination link identifiers;

the second selecting step includes selecting the one message class entry based on a match

between a signaling link selection value in the received signaling message and one of the signaling link selection entries.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The medium of claim 22, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on at least a portion of the destination point code.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The medium of claim 21, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on identifying one of a plurality of input linksets having supplied the received signaling message.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The medium of claim 21, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on prescribed user-selected selection criteria.

27-30. (CANCELED).

31. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A signaling network node configured for routing a received signaling message, the signaling network node comprising:

means for storing message class entries identifying respective message classes, each message class entry specifying at least one destination link identifier for a corresponding destination link assigned to the corresponding message class;

means for classifying the received signaling message as assigned to a specific message class based on prescribed message class selection criteria;

first means for selecting one of the message class entries based on the corresponding identified message class matching the specific message class of the received signaling message; and

second means for selecting one of the destination links based on the at least one

destination link identifier specified in the one message class entry.

32. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 31, wherein:

the destination links are grouped in prescribed linksets having respective linkset identifiers;

the storing means is configured for storing linkset entries including destination point code entries and the respective assigned linkset identifiers; and

the first means is configured for determining a match between a destination point code value in the received signaling message and the destination point code entry of one of the linkset entries, and matching the received signaling message to the one message class entry specifying the at least one destination link within the one linkset identified by the one linkset entry.

33. (ORIGINAL) The node of claim 32, wherein:

the storing means is configured for storing a signaling link selection entry associated with a corresponding one of the destination link identifiers;

the second means is configured for selecting the one message class entry based on a match between a signaling link selection value in the received signaling message and one of the signaling link selection entries.

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 32, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on at least a portion of the destination point code.

35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 31, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on identifying one of a plurality of input linksets having supplied the received signaling message.

36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 31, wherein the prescribed

message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on prescribed user-selected selection criteria.

37. (ORIGINAL) The node of claim 36, wherein the user-selected selection criteria includes a user-selected data pattern.

38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 31, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on a service indicator value from the received signaling message.

39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 31, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received signaling message based on global title translation (GTT) parameters retrieved from the received signaling message.

40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The node of claim 39, wherein the prescribed message class selection criteria include classifying the received message based on a Global Title Address (GTA) from the GTT parameters.

41. (NEW) The node of claim 1, wherein the processor is configured for classifying the received signaling message independent of any information in the routing table.

42. (NEW) The method of claim 11, wherein the classifying includes classifying the received signaling message independent of any information in the routing table.

43. (NEW) The medium of claim 21, wherein the classifying includes classifying the received signaling message independent of any information in the routing table.

44. (NEW) The node of claim 31, wherein the means for classifying is configured for

classifying the received signaling message independent of any information in the means for storing.